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DEPUTY STATE SECRETARY FOR EU AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Ms. Krisztina Berta

The Honourable Juan Fernando López Aguilar
Chairman of the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee
European Parliament
1047 Brussels

Brussels, 24 June 2011

Re: *Activities of the Standing Committee on operational cooperation on internal security (COSI) during the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union*

Dear Chairman,

I am writing to inform Honourable Members of your Committee of activities undertaken by the Standing Committee on operational cooperation on internal security during the past six months.

As the Council Decision establishing the Standing Committee on operational cooperation on internal security (2010/130/EU) requires that the Council “shall keep informed the European Parliament and the national Parliaments of the proceedings of the Standing Committee,” our Presidency has endeavoured to brief Members of your Committee orally and, now, in writing.

In his hearing before the LIBE Committee on 25 January 2011, Minister of Interior Sándor Pintér, President of the Council had set out a number of priorities that were subsequently discussed, implemented or prepared for adoption by COSI. They were as follows:

1. Step up the **fight against organised crime** by adopting Council conclusions in this field (as required by the EU policy cycle for organised and serious international crime), enhancing information exchange with civilian crisis management missions, strengthening asset recovery and collecting complementary actions used to fight organised crime;
2. Adopt Council conclusions on the Commission communication on the European Union **internal security strategy** in action;



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3. Enhance the links between the **external and internal aspects of EU security**;
4. Step up the fight against **cybercrime** and enhance the EU's cyber-security;
5. Continue implementing the **European Pact to combat international drug trafficking**.

Implementation

COSI held three meetings, and its Support Group eight preparatory meetings, between January and June 2011, with the following results:

1. On 9 June 2011, the Council adopted **conclusions on setting the EU's priorities for the fight against organised crime between 2011 and 2013**. These priorities include the following: weakening the capacity of West African organised crime groups to traffic cocaine and heroin to the EU; mitigating the role of the Western Balkans as a transit and storage zone for illicit commodities; weakening the capacity of organised crime groups to facilitate illegal immigration; reducing the production and distribution of synthetic drugs; disrupting the trafficking of illicit commodities in container form; combating against trafficking in human beings; reducing the general capabilities of mobile organised crime groups to engage in criminal activities; and stepping up the fight against cybercrime. To prepare the implementation of these Council conclusions, COSI also sought, on 1 June 2011, to identify the relevant experts to define strategic goals under each priority and revised the Comprehensive Operational and Strategic Planning for the Police (COSPOL) methodology to bring it into line with the EU policy cycle for organised and serious international crime.
2. On 9 June, the Council took note of the **complementary approaches and actions to prevent and combat organised crime**, a handbook of best practices compiled by the Hungarian Presidency on the basis of work carried out by a project group bringing together experts from Belgium, Finland, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, the United Kingdom, the European Commission, Europol and the General Secretariat of the Council. This project group met on several occasions during the Hungarian Presidency.
3. On 9 June, the Council took note of the **working method for closer cooperation and coordination in the field of EU security**, which included two core proposals put forward by the Hungarian Presidency: the organisation of joint meetings in the field of EU security and the establishment of an informal forum bringing together EU security actors to discuss meeting agendas and future events. This working method had been discussed by COSI and the PSC, and by the two preparatory bodies meeting together for the first time on 1 June 2011.¹ At this joint meeting, members of the two preparatory bodies expressed their strong

¹ <http://www.eu2011.hu/news/closer-cooperation-eu-security-policy>



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support for the PSC's plan to draw up a roadmap spelling out next steps in cooperation between external and internal security actors concerning intelligence support, information exchange, decision-making, planning new civilian crisis management missions and enhancing the capabilities of missions. The Polish Presidency intends to take this work forward.

4. In the field of **counter-terrorism**, COSI considered two documents on 27 April: the 2011 Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (TE-SAT) prepared by Europol and a report on the judicial dimension of the fight against terrorism, a set of recommendations prepared by the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator. The Coordinating Committee in the area of police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters (former CATS) and COSI may return to these recommendations under future Presidencies.
5. On 27 April, COSI took note of the recent functioning of the coordination mechanism between **single points of contact** between the chairpersons and experts of the Customs Cooperation Working Party, the Law Enforcement Working Party and representatives of Frontex and Europol.
6. On 24 February, the Council adopted **conclusions on the Commission communication on the European Union internal security strategy in action**, which clarified the role of the Commission, COSI and Member States in the implementation of the Internal Security Strategy. This document had been discussed by COSI on 9 February.
7. On 9 February, COSI discussed the outcome of **cooperation between JHA Agencies**, namely Europol, Eurojust, Frontex and CEPOL, taking note of progress in this endeavour. On 1 June, Eurojust also presented to COSI operational cases of cooperation with Europol.
8. On 9 February, COSI took note of a report concerning the implementation of three documents concerning **drug trafficking from West Africa**: the European Pact to combat international drug trafficking—disrupting cocaine and heroin routes; the action-oriented paper to improve cooperation in combating organised crime, especially drug trafficking, originating in West Africa; and the Council conclusions on the strengthening of the fight against drug trafficking in West Africa. This report set out a number of steps necessary to mitigate the threat posed by organised crime groups trafficking drugs from West Africa.
9. In the field of **operational cooperation with third countries**, the Justice and Home Affairs Council and COSI discussed on several occasions the Austrian Police Equal Performance proposal, which aims to improve the performance of police forces in the Western Balkans by applying common standards on policing and enhancing their operational cooperation with EU police forces. At Finland's



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initiative, COSI discussed on 1 June the question of operational cooperation between the EU and Russia.

I trust that the above summary will be of interest to Members of your Committee. Should you or your colleagues wish to obtain further information about any of the above files, please do not hesitate to contact me.

May I also take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude for the excellent cooperation that Members of your Committee have shown in working with the Hungarian Presidency. I hope that this excellent cooperation will continue under the next Trio of Presidencies.

Yours sincerely,

d. Berta

Dr. Krisztina Berta

Chairperson of COSI

